



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
FOR
ACHIEVEMENT SCHOOL DISTRICT ZONE OPERATORS**

**RFI # 33101-2202633103DGF10
MARCH 11, 2022**

1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The State of Tennessee, Department of Education (“TDOE” or “department”) issues this Request for Information (“RFI”) for the purpose of gathering information regarding non-profit entities, such as charter management organizations and education management organizations, that are interested and have the ability and the capacity to operate a zone of ASD Priority Schools (i.e., 5% of schools with the lowest success rate (using up to three years of data) in the state). See T.C.A. § 49-1-614 and T.C.A. § 49-13-106(f)(2).

Through this RFI, the State seeks to:

- Identify experienced and qualified non-profit entities (i.e., charter management organizations and/or education management organizations) that are interested in operating a zone of Priority Schools in Tennessee.
- Non-profit entity’s ability to operate a zone of Priority Schools in Tennessee.
- Non-profit entity’s capacity to operate a zone of Priority Schools in Tennessee.

The information collected through this RFI will be used to inform the State’s development of any future solicitation.

2. BACKGROUND

In January 2010, Tennessee passed the First to the Top Act, a sweeping reform of the state’s education policy that was the cornerstone of its successful Race to the Top application. The Act created the Achievement School District (ASD), a state-run education authority with the power to authorize charter management organizations to operate schools. The ASD was charged with enacting bold reforms to drive transformational results for students zoned to attend or attending a Priority School. In doing so, the ASD authorizes non-profit partners, and works as a catalyst for state-wide school improvement through increase focus on Priority Schools and improved student outcomes.

Currently, the department is relaunching the next iteration of the ASD, which includes a transition to a full charter portfolio. The goal of the department is to issue grant contracts to non-profit entities (i.e., zone leads) to operate zones of schools (four-six Priority Schools within the ASD). The relevant parties involved are:

- Tennessee Department of Education
 - Responsible for monitoring and oversight of ASD
 - Manages grant contracts with zone leads
- Achievement School District
 - Authorizer of charter agreements for schools (i.e., operators) within the ASD.
 - The ASD and operator will sign a separate charter agreement pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-110
- Zone Leads
 - Non-profit entities that will enter into a grant contract with the TDOE to manage a zone of schools within the ASD.
 - Submits charter applications to the ASD for approval on behalf of the schools in its zone.
- Operators (i.e., schools)
 - Schools within an ASD zone.
 - Responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school under the terms of the charter agreement.

Scope of Services (not an exhaustive list):

- Day-to-day operations of zone of schools
- Control and be responsible for financial management and performance of the zone of schools including:
 - budgeting,
 - expenditures,
 - internal controls, and
 - reporting.
- Implement an academic program that aligns with state and federal law, rules, regulations, and policies of the State Board of Education
- Administer all Tennessee Department of Education required student assessments, including but not limited to the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program, ACT, end of course assessments, and English learner assessments for the required grades and testing windows.
- Provide special education services, related services, and accommodations for students who are eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any applicable provisions of State and federal law.
 - Responsible for the identification of students in need of special education services, provision of services, development, and implementation of individualized education programs for students identified for special education services
- Hiring and management of all school-level personnel ensuring that all personnel are appropriately licensed and endorsed consistent with state and federal laws, regulations, and requirements.

3. COMMUNICATIONS

3.1. Please submit your response to this RFI to:

Laitin Beecham, Sourcing Account Specialist

Central Procurement Office
Tennessee Tower, 3rd Floor
312 Rosa L. Parks Ave., Nashville, TN 37243
p. 615-291-5794
Laitin.Beecham@tn.gov

- 3.2. Please feel free to contact the Department of Education with any questions regarding this RFI. The main point of contact will be:

Trudy Hughes, Chief of Staff
Office of Districts and Schools
p. 629-395-4692
Trudy.Hughes@tn.gov

- 3.3. Please reference RFI # 33101-2202633103DGF10 with all communications to this RFI.

4. RFI SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

EVENT		TIME (Central Time Zone)	DATE (all dates are State business days)
1.	RFI Issued		March 11, 2022
2.	RFI Response Deadline	2:00 PM	April 1, 2022

5. GENERAL INFORMATION:

- 5.1. Please note that responding to this RFI is not a prerequisite for responding to any future solicitations related to this project and a response to this RFI will not create any contract rights. Responses to this RFI will become property of the State.
- 5.2. The information gathered during this RFI is part of an ongoing procurement. In order to prevent an unfair advantage among potential respondents, the RFI responses will not be available until after the completion of evaluation of any responses, proposals, or bids resulting from a Request for Qualifications, Request for Proposals, Invitation to Bid or other procurement method. In the event that the State chooses not to go further in the procurement process and responses are never evaluated, the responses to the procurement including the responses to the RFI, will be considered confidential by the State.
- 5.3. The State will not pay for any costs associated with responding to this RFI.

6. INFORMATIONAL FORMS:

The State is requesting the following information from all interested parties. Please fill out the following forms:

RFI # 33101-2202633103DGF10 TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM
1. Respondent legal entity name:

<p>2. Respondent contact person:</p> <p>Name, Title:</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>Phone Number:</p> <p>Email:</p>
<p>3. Brief description of experience providing a similar scope of services to Priority Schools.</p>
<p>4. Does your company have an interest in providing these services in Tennessee?</p>
<p>5. Does your company have the capacity to provide these services in Tennessee?</p>
<p>6. What is the timeframe (i.e., 2022-23 school year or 2023-24 school year) in which your company could enter a grant contract with Tennessee to begin this work?</p>

<p>ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS</p>
<p>1. Please provide input on alternative approaches or additional things to consider that might benefit the State:</p>